



April 22, 2002

**ROAD MAINTENANCE AND ABANDONMENT PLAN (RMAP)
Questions and Answers**

A. Forms, Templates, Mapping, and Submittal:

A1. May landowners modify the RMAP forms?

Landowners have the option of utilizing Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provided forms or creating their own as long as the information as required under WAC 222-24-050, -051 and -052 is provided. It is recommended that you contact the RMAP Specialist in the DNR region office if you intend to use a different format.

A2. Can landowners use color codes instead of symbols on maps?

Yes, however, additional color copies are needed for review. Check with the DNR region office to determine how many color copies are needed.

A3. How do I get required maps and Watershed Administrative Unit (WAU) information?

Contact the DNR region office where you own land.

A4. Can DNR provide WAU and some resource information in digital format?

Yes. Contact the DNR region RMAP Specialist for information. Digital data is distributed from Olympia.

B. Water Related:

- B1. What is the process for changing a water type?

Until the updated fish habitat water type maps are available, waters will be classified using the interim water typing system (WAC 222-16-031). If a dispute arises or a correction is needed, a Water Type Change form must be submitted to DNR that documents the findings of a protocol survey and/or ID team review. Refer to the Forest Practices Board Manual, Section 13, for further guidance.

- B2. Why do landowners need to verify types of waters and wetlands either adjacent to or crossed by roads within a RMAP?

The water and wetland types on the DNR base maps may not be up to date. Correct water and wetland types are critical to ensure adequate resource protection during RMAP implementation. For example, without knowledge of the correct water types, high priority issues such as fish passage barriers could be missed during assessment.

- B3. Can a seasonal stream be designated as Type 3 water?

Yes. Some fish species utilize seasonal streams at various life stages.

- B4. Does fish passage need to be considered above natural barriers or in places where landowners do not believe there are fish?

Yes. The rules presume there is residential fish use wherever the physical criteria of Type 3 water exists. All Type 3 water crossings need to provide for fish passage unless a protocol survey and/or ID team determines otherwise.

- B5. How do you determine if a culvert provides fish passage?

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has developed guidelines for determining fish passage at stream crossings. Contact the WDFW regional Forests and Fish Biologist or <http://www.wa.gov/wdfw/hab/engineer/fishbarr.htm>.

- B6. Is it permissible to construct a Type 4 or 5 water crossing, utilizing an over-flow dip in the road surface in conjunction with a culvert that does not meet the 100-year flow requirement?

All new and replacement culverts must meet the 100-year flow requirement, unless WDFW approves an exception through the HPA process.

- B7. Have the Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) requirements administered by WDFW related to road maintenance changed?

Not as of November 2001. However, for current information, contact the regional WDFW Forests and Fish Biologist for HPA requirements.

C. Planning:

- C1. Does a RMAP need to cover roads used for timber haul across non-forest (e.g. agricultural) lands?

No. RMAPs are only required for forest roads on forest lands.

- C2. An easement used for forest practice activities through private forest land is used as access to a home on non-forest land. Is an RMAP required and if so, who would need to submit it?

Yes. An RMAP would be required for the portion of the access road on forest land, and the underlying landowner would be responsible.

- C3. My haul route crosses another person's ownership. Do I need to include the access route in my RMAP?

No. Your RMAP obligation only applies to forest roads on your forest land ownership.

- C4. Some roads may be jointly owned or in some cases, each party only owns half of the roadbed. Who has the RMAP responsibility?

Both landowners have RMAP responsibility and any notices or enforcement would be issued to them jointly.

- C5. Who is responsible for jointly controlled roads between tribes and private landowners?

The rules do not apply to Tribal ownership. However, if a road is only controlled by the Tribe through an easement or other contractual arrangement and the underlying land is in private ownership, and then the rules do apply to the road. The private owner is responsible for the RMAP.

- C6. If a railroad is used to haul forest products through forest land, is a RMAP required?

No, an active railroad is not a forest road.

- C7. Is a perpetual timber owner or the underlying landowner responsible for submitting a RMAP?

Both qualify as the landowner. The landowners should inform DNR which landowner will fulfill the RMAP obligation. Only one landowner needs to submit the RMAP.

- C8. Who is responsible for submitting a RMAP for land with shared timber rights?

The underlying landowner.

- C9. A new landowner has not logged his / her land, but the previous landowner had logged the land after 1974. Is a RMAP needed?

Yes.

C10. Must a licensed engineer sign RMAPs before submitting them to DNR?

No.

C11. Does planning have to be done on a watershed administrative unit basis?

No. It is not a regulatory requirement for a landowner to do their planning on a WAU basis.

C12. Forest lands burned in recent fires may not be harvested for many years. Are we required to submit RMAPs for the burned areas?

Yes, for all forest land with forest roads.

C13. How will landowners who frequently buy and sell land deal with RMAPs?

Landowners with more than 500 acres in a DNR region must commit to a schedule for completing their RMAP obligations. Depending on the total ownership, it might be advantageous to do it all at once rather than 20% per year. Any landowner selling forest land has a responsibility to notify the new landowner at time of sale of any continuing obligations (see WAC 222-20-055). Landowners purchasing land need to update their RMAP on or before the plan anniversary date to reflect any new road maintenance obligations.

C14. How do you submit a RMAP that identifies priorities across DNR regions? Who approves the forest practices application (FPA)?

Road plans that cross more than one DNR administrative region require consultation with all the regions involved. The RMAP Specialists will make a determination as to how to proceed. There could be a variety of solutions. The region office with jurisdictional authority will approve the FPAs.

C15. My forest land is not zoned for long-term forest use; do I have to submit a RMAP?

Yes. RMAPs are not affected by zoning. RMAPs are required for forest roads on lands defined as forest land in the forest practices rules.

C16. Is a RMAP required if the land will be or has been harvested under a Class IV General conversion FPA?

The act of harvesting under a Class IV General conversion does not convert the land. An “active use incompatible with growing timber” must be established on the property before it is considered converted under the Forest Practices Act. If the land is truly converted, then it is no longer forest land and the RMAP obligations do not apply.

C17. Can I consolidate my family’s holdings to become a forest landowner with more than 500 acres within a respective DNR region?

Yes, if there is a common landowner for all the parcels.

D. Abandonment and Orphaned Roads:

- D1. Is a landowner required to perform road maintenance on a properly abandoned road approved by DNR?

The landowner no longer has road maintenance responsibilities associated with the Forest Practice rules and regulations. Other agency jurisdictions may still apply.

- D2. If I abandon a road, may I still run other equipment such as a tractor or ORV on it?

From a forest practices point of view, yes, as long as the road is blocked so that 4-wheel highway vehicles cannot pass the point of closure at the time of abandonment and it satisfies (a) through (e) of WAC 222-24-052 (3) for road abandonment. An HPA may be required by WDFW to ford streams where culverts have been removed.

- D3. Do I have to assess orphaned roads?

Yes. Landowners are required to inventory and assess risk to public resources or public safety from orphaned roads in conjunction with their RMAPs.

- D4. If there are resource or public safety issues associated with orphaned roads, do I have to fix them?

No. After July 1, 2006, the statewide situation will be evaluated to determine if something needs to be done. However, landowners can voluntarily take corrective action before that date.

- D5. Who accepts/approves road abandonment?

DNR forest practices staff.

E. Reporting:

- E1. How much previous road maintenance work may be reported within a RMAP?

Landowners can report road maintenance activities completed before March 2000 if they meet the standards of the current rules.

- E2. Should Class I maintenance activities be reported in the annual plan?

No, they are not required to be reported. However, a landowner may elect to do so.

- E3. Does routine road maintenance have to be reported in the annual plan?

No.

F. General:

- F1. Do jeep roads/trails that were created by recreational users need to be assessed and do they need to be repaired if resource damage is occurring?

If they were not built to facilitate a forest practice and they are not used as forest roads, they would not fall under the requirements of a RMAP.

- F2. What is the meaning of the expression “all forest roads must be improved and maintained to the standards” of the forest practice rules?

It means to improve and/or maintain your roads to meet or exceed the standards of forest practice rules 222-24-050, 051 and 052. The goal of road improvement and maintenance is to prevent potential or actual damage to public resources.

- F3. Do you have to skew a relief pipe?

Skewing a relief pipe is a Best Management Practice which facilitates drainage and assists in the self-cleaning of the structure. This is not a requirement in all instances and is not necessary on roads less than 3% grade or at the bottom of a vertical curve.

- F4. Are skid trails considered to be roads? If so, do they need to be assessed?

No.

- F5. What is the definition of skidding?

Skidding is considered the moving of logs by mechanical or other methods from the harvest location to the landing or road.

- F6. What happens if a natural event or new discovery changes priorities in an existing approved RMAP?

The landowner must submit any proposed changes to the plan or work schedule on or before the RMAP's anniversary date.

- F7. Can I submit harvest proposals with my RMAP?

Yes.

- F8. Is a fire access road considered a forest road if not in use?

Yes.

F9. What are RMBs?

Road Management Blocks. This allows landowners to divide their ownership into smaller units, and gives them flexibility to designate areas for RMAP prioritization and scheduling.

F10. Do project specific details need to be submitted for road maintenance work?

Yes, on the forest practices application, if an application is required for the road maintenance work.

F11. How can RMAP priorities be set if all RMBs rank the same?

A landowner can propose a second tier of priorities for evaluation by the department.

F12. Can the first and/or subsequent RMAP(s) be less than 20% for a given year?

Minor variations may be proposed to the RMAP Specialist and Forests and Fish participants.

F13. I have a maintenance plan that was approved before March 2000. Can I claim credit for the plan under my first 20% requirement?

Yes. A landowner can include previously submitted and approved plans if they meet the standards of the new rules.

F14. I have spent money to develop a plan that still does not meet the requirements of the rules. What do I do now?

Contact and work with the region RMAP Specialist to resolve any deficiencies.

F15. If a Forests and Fish participant has a disagreement with the prioritized inventory how is it resolved?

It is discussed with the RMAP Specialist to determine a resolution.

F16. Does a fire access road need to be maintained to the same standard as a forest haul road?

Yes.

F17. My HCP has a requirement to address road issues in an area that is not shown as a high priority using RMAP inventory and scheduling assumptions. What should I do?

Discuss this with the RMAP Specialist. Those road locations and priorities would need to be reviewed by agencies of jurisdiction.